



Principle 1



Trainer's Script

Instructions, Materials, Equipment

EQUIPMENT and MATERIALS



Computer with Power-Point (PPT) or Overhead projector and screen



Transparencies W1-1 to W1-19 or Writing PPT

Optional:
blank transparencies and pens



Handouts W-1 to W-6



VHS video player and TV/monitor for Video:
ECR 3-5 Writing Module

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Symbols shown above will appear in the left column of the Trainer's Script when an indicated item should be used.

Trainer Actions also appear in the left column.

Text in the right column of the Trainer's Script provides the content to share with participants.

TRAINER NOTES

Training Time Total: 5 hours (approximate)

- **Principle 1: approximately 2 hours**
- Principle 2: approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes
- Principle 3: approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes

Participants Need to Bring...

Photos of their early care and education setting or home for an activity in this principle. Photos could be of any areas where children play, eat lunch or snacks, read books, paint, etc. If participants cannot bring photos, they may bring a diagram of their early care and education setting or home (sketched, not drawn to full scale!).

A copy of their daily schedule.

Frequently Asked Questions

A set of frequently asked questions concerning this principle is in the Supplemental Training Materials.

Homework Assignments

An outline of Writing Module homework assignments is in the Supplemental Trainer Materials.

Video

A video is available to assist with this module. The video provides examples of developmentally appropriate activities which lead to writing skill development. It also gives examples of ways to structure the environment to provide opportunities to develop an awareness of print. (See Supplemental Training Materials.)



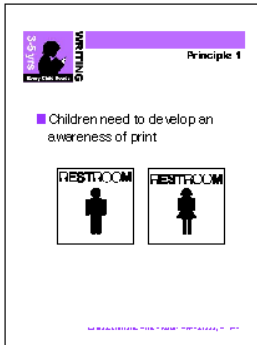
Trainer's Script

PRINCIPLE 1

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



Display PPT or
Transparency
W1-1



Welcome participants

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Today, we will be talking about writing.

We will review three principles in the Writing Module, as well as some brief information about the development of writing skills.

In addition, we will practice the strategies and assign practice homework activities.

First, we need to begin by having you evaluate your understanding of the development of writing skills.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



**Distribute
Handout W-1:
Participant
Profile;
Writing
Outcomes**

**Allow participants
5 minutes to
complete the
Profile**

**Collect Profiles
before continuing**

Save these forms to return to participants for review at the end of the Writing Module. Participants will re-assess their actual beginning level of knowledge.

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Please complete this form. The purpose of completing this form is to assess the success of the training in teaching you new skills.

Put your name and date at the top. Mark "yes" or "no" for each statement by placing an X in the correct column. If you mark "yes," please complete the next column, "How often or how many times each day?"

Answer the questions the best you can. All of these questions will be easier to understand at the end of the module. You will be reviewing your answers at that time.

Also, the information will be gathered six months after training is completed.

You will have about five minutes to complete this form.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Let's do an activity.

Please stand if you have done any of these things within the last week. You may sit down after you stand for an activity that is like you. You may stand for any of the activities that are like you.

- I have filled out a form within the last week
- I have written a note to a friend, spouse, teacher, or parent
- I have written a report
- I have made a "to do" list
- I have drawn a picture... or "doodled"
- I have signed my name
- I have typed on a typewriter... or on a computer

Thanks! Obviously, writing is a part of your every day activities and lives. Let's see how developmental writing can be a part of preschoolers' lives.



**Distribute
Handout W-2:
Transparency
Notes
Writing Module
Principle 1**

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



Display PPT or
Transparency
W1-2



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Language, reading, and writing are dynamically linked in getting children ready to read.

- Language skills help children develop reading skills.
- Language and reading skills help children develop writing skills.
- Reading and writing skills help children develop more language skills.

All three skills are interrelated and one helps build and expand the other.

Therefore, it is important to encourage developmental writing skills along with early language and reading skills as children get ready to read.

Writing helps children begin to experience and learn about the same letters as those used in reading.

Developing skills needed to form letters takes time.

It is important to understand how writing develops in young children so we know what is appropriate and not appropriate writing for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. Interestingly enough, recent research indicates that children become active writers long before they can write or print alphabet letters correctly.

Writing skills actually begin to develop with a child's grasp and wave of a rattle and eventually evolves into drawing connected lines to form letters.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



Display PPT or Transparency W1-3



Gross motor skill examples:
running, kicking a ball,
throwing a ball

Fine motor skill examples:
writing, playing the piano,
sewing, knitting, repairing
watches, working on
electronics

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Various researchers describe the development of writing skills.

We will review three stages of writing that often overlap: sensorimotor, early scribbling, and writing first letters.

The sensorimotor stage refers to children developing gross and fine motor skills. Both systems are developing at the same time. However, fine motor skills, due to their complexity, take longer to fully develop.

There are two systems which affect the motor performance of writing. One system controls the shoulder muscles and posture. Gross motor skills are part of this system. Climbing on playground equipment, swimming, and drawing on a large chalkboard strengthen this system.

What are some examples of gross motor skills?

The other system controls the elbow, wrist and hand movements. This is usually thought of as the fine motor skills. It is a very complex system and allows humans to perform fine dexterity movements with smooth coordination and timing.

What are some examples of fine motor skills?

...continued...

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



**Distribute
Handout W-3:
*Stages and Skills
of Writing***

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

This handout provides an overview of motor skill development of children as well as pre-writing and self-care skills.

These skills are described for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. Children actually begin developing these skills at an earlier age.

Under 18 months of age, children are working to develop grasp-and-release skills. By 18 to 36 months, children develop more mature grasp-and-release patterns. Now they can easily pick up small objects using their thumb and index fingers, build with blocks, and use tools to imitate adult actions.

Between the ages of 2 to 6 years, small muscles in the palm develop. These muscles allow manipulation of objects within the hand or in-hand manipulation skills such as putting coins in a bank or buttoning a shirt.

In-hand manipulation skills are to handwriting skills as sound awareness skills are to reading skills. Since these skills develop during the preschool years, facilitating these skills is a critical part of preschool.

Many fine motor skills require bilateral skills, meaning using both hands.

Stringing beads is a two-handed activity. One hand holds the bead and the other hand pushes the string through the bead.

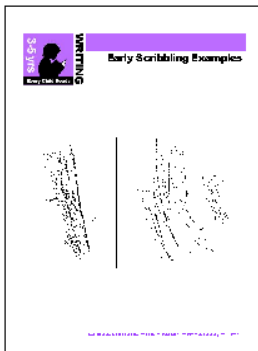
Using scissors, drawing pictures, and writing first letters all involve bilateral skills. One hand holds the paper while the other hand cuts, draws, or writes.

It is important to offer many experiences to children that allow them to develop different kinds of grasps.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



**Display PPT or
Transparency
W1-4**



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Through these experiences, children will eventually be able to grasp a pencil, crayon, etc., to scribble and write letters.

Pre-writing skills are described on the handout and range from scribbling at 3 years to writing first letters by age 5.

Scribbling is important for children developmentally. It is a beginning skill that leads to writing letters.

Scribbling builds background knowledge and experience for later writing of first letters.

Scribbling means children can hold writing tools and see the effect of any circular shape, dot, twisted, or straight line they may make.

Scribbling may occur as young as two years but usually occurs between three to five years of age.

These are examples of actual scribbling. I'm sure you've seen many examples yourself!

Writing first letters emerges as children's scribbles take on writing-like characteristics.

Children may begin to start writing first letters around four years of age.

Lines become more straight than circular and arranged more horizontally than vertically. At this stage, children's work may have drawing and writing combined, and the child can point out the difference to the adult.

Children know which one is the picture and which one is the word.

Here are some examples of writing first letters.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



Display PPT or Transparency W1-5



Display PPT or Transparency W1-6



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Children's writing skills vary along a great continuum, and adults need to remember that not every child will have the same skills at the same time or age. These developmental stages are approximations. Few children follow exact sequential stages in this developmental process. Gross and fine motor skills, scribbling skills, and writing-first-letter skills often overlap.

Now that we have reviewed the developmental stages of writing, how do adults encourage development of these skills?

Three Writing Module principles were selected for parents and teachers to enhance writing skills of children.

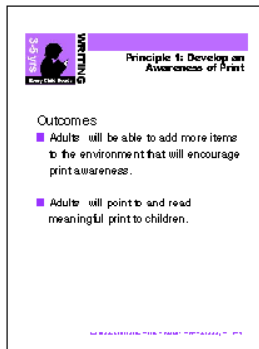
- First, children need to develop an awareness of print;
- Second, children need to develop fine motor hand skills for writing; and
- Third, children need to engage in meaningful writing experiences.

The first principle, children need to develop an awareness of print, means that children need to become aware of printed words and understand that print is used for two purposes: reading and writing.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



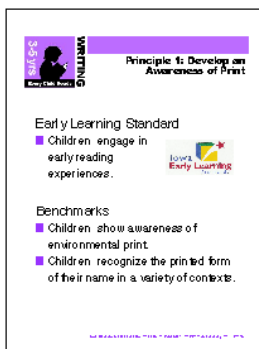
Display PPT or Transparency W1-7



Point out the principle at top of transparency



Display PPT or Transparency W1-8



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

At the end of this principle, it is expected that you will have an understanding of awareness of print and be able to:

- Add new items to your environment that will encourage children to become more aware of print.
- Point to and read meaningful print to children so they begin to understand that print connects with spoken words.

The Iowa Early Learning Standards include:

- Children engage in early reading experiences.

The benchmarks for the Writing Module, Principle 1, are taken from the reading standard and state that:

- Children show an awareness of environmental print.
- Children recognize the printed form of his/her name in a variety of contexts.

The skills for early reading and writing often overlap. When developing an awareness of print, it benefits both reading and writing.

Let's begin with the first principle.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Awareness of print provides a foundation or background knowledge for writing words. It provides the visual memory or picture in children's minds of the forms of the lines. Write the word "read" in lower case letters. How do you know how to make the letter "r"? You have seen a lower case "r" before. You know it is a straight line with a short hook to the right.

Now I'd like for you to write the Chinese word for crisis on a piece of paper.

PAUSE and let the group wonder



Display PPT or Transparency
W1-9



Now that you have seen the form of lines, try writing the word. It's much easier now, isn't it? You have an awareness of Chinese print.

...continued...

ACTIONS / MATERIALS

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

The Chinese express the word 'crisis' with two characters. The upper character represents danger, while the lower character conveys hidden opportunity.

You would not have known that unless I pointed to the characters and told you.

It is important for caregivers to point out printed words to children.

Most children first see written words in their homes, early care and education settings, and in their communities.

For example, many things families do promote print awareness such as writing notes (Be back at 7:00!), making shopping lists, sending birthday cards, watching the title of a movie or TV show as it begins (Lion King or Sesame Street, brought to you by the letter B, etc.), or typing on the Internet.

In everyday life in the community, children are surrounded by print on street signs, food displays at grocery stores, favorite places to eat with kid's menus on placemats and bags, or even the time-and-temperature clock at the bank.

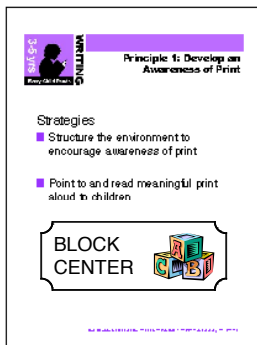
In early care and education settings, children might see their names printed above their cubbies or words on a bulletin board or poster.

Adults can help children become aware of print and writing in their environment using two strategies to guide children's attention to print.

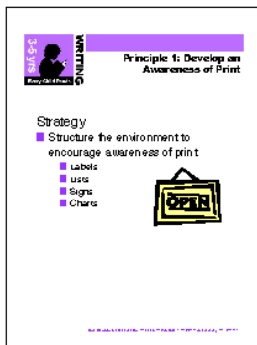
ACTIONS / MATERIALS



Display PPT or Transparency W1-10



Display PPT or Transparency W1-11



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

The two strategies for helping children develop an awareness of print are:

- First, structure the environment to encourage children's awareness of print
- Second, point to and read meaningful print aloud to children

Do these sound like reading strategies? They could be.

Awareness of print provides a foundation for both reading and writing skills.

You will be encouraging the development of two skills at one time. That's a good deal!

The first strategy is to structure the environment to assist children in developing an awareness of print. In other words, we want to display meaningful writing in our early care and education environment.

Adults can make labels, lists, signs, and charts to provide many meaningful opportunities for children to see printed words.

Having many of these types of examples in children's environments, not just one example, is important.

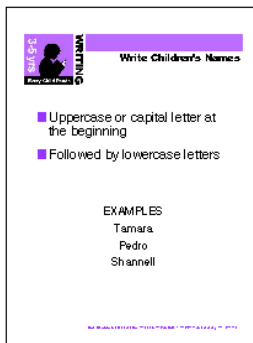
ACTIONS / MATERIALS



Distribute Handout W-4: *Structuring the Environment for Awareness of Print*



Display PPT or Transparency W1-12



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

I'm sure you have used some of these ideas working with children.

We're going to discuss how these experiences help children become aware of print, and then we'll add your ideas to this handout.

The information I am going to give you is in your handout.

Let's start with labels.

The most meaningful label to children is their name.

Children's names should be on all places with their belongings such as cubbies, coat hooks, or lockers, because this is a most meaningful label to children.

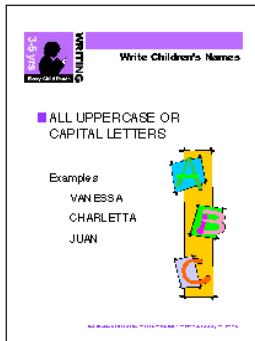
There are different ideas about how children's names should be written. Some researchers feel children's names should be written with an uppercase or capital letter at the beginning followed by lowercase letters, since that is the typical way words are written, and it helps children become familiar with print they see in books.

Olsen (1998) suggests that children's names should be written with all uppercase or capital letters. This method facilitates school-age children learning to write letters as well as enhancing reading skills.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



**Display PPT or
Transparency
W1-13**



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Olsen indicates that writing capital letters for school-age children is much easier, developmentally appropriate, reduces reversals, and decreases frustration.

Capital letters are all the same height, all start at the same place, all occupy the same vertical space (letter made between two lines, not above or below a line), and are easy to recognize and identify.

Many common words in our world, which children may encounter before entering school, are all in capitals, such as the words: EXIT, BOYS, GIRLS, RESTROOMS, DANGER, and HOSPITAL.

By the end of kindergarten or in the first grade, children learn to write lowercase letters and are then able to write their name in upper- and lowercase letters.

It is suggested that preschool teachers and caregivers check with their local school district to determine the type of letters being used.

Back to meaningful labels. Another way to use labels is to mark the location of toys, books, or materials in the room. Mark the toy container and the shelf with matching labels.

At the beginning of the year, a picture may be placed beside the printed word on a container and shelf to assist children in matching the words.

...continued...

ACTIONS / MATERIALS

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Later in the year, the picture may be removed and children can match words to word labels. For 3-year-old children and possibly 4-year-olds, you may never remove the pictures.

However, just labeling things in the room will not increase children's print awareness.

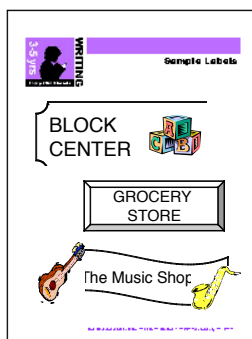
In addition, the adult needs to explain and show children that the words on the container label and the shelf label match; otherwise, children may ignore the label.

Another great way to help children become more aware of the printed labels is to let them help place the labels on the containers and shelves.

Letting children help and attach labels to shelves or bins helps them notice the labels and understand their purpose.



**Display PPT or Transparency
W1-14**



Labels don't have to be just one word. For example, you might have two words displayed: BLOCK CENTER or GROCERY STORE.

Just a word of caution, please don't label everything in the room, like the chair, table, or door. Instead, label things that are important to children, like the pet fish name, Angel, or the light switch position, on/off.

What are some examples of things that are important to children that you could label? What are some things you probably wouldn't need to label?

ACTIONS / MATERIALS

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Lists are vital to many adults' daily living and can be used to promote print awareness for children, too. These are a few suggestions to take advantage of using lists.

Make a sign-up list for turn-taking if new materials or toys are available for playing. As children take turns, they may cross off their name. Adults may need to read younger children's names on lists at the beginning, but soon children will know their names in print.

Other ideas for lists are: supplies needed to make a snack, favorite things seen during a field trip, or steps to follow during daily routines such as washing hands.

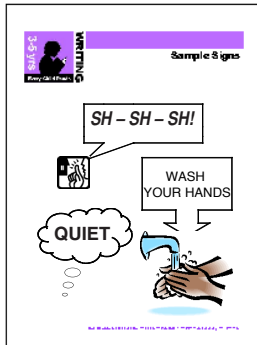
These lists can be made on a chalkboard, on large newsprint, or poster board. Write lists so all children can see the words.

Don't forget – during the first part of the year, or for younger children, the adult will need to read and point to the words on the various lists.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



Display PPT or
Transparency
W1-15



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Signs are another vital resource used by adults that can help build print awareness for preschoolers.

A "QUIET" sign or "SH - SH - SH - SH" sign may be used during naptime or to hand to children at the head or end of the line when walking in the hall.

Signs may be used to show the number of children that can be in a particular center. A sign could read "3 CHILDREN ONLY." Once again, at the beginning of the year, you could have a picture of three children to help convey the meaning.

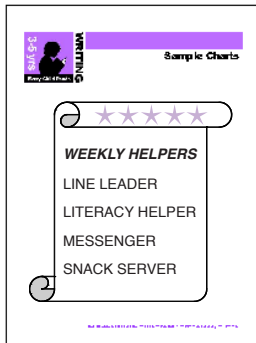
Post signs for directions in routine places. For example, "WASH YOUR HANDS" could be displayed by the sink or "FLUSH THE TOILET" by the toilet.

As we discussed with labels, involve the children in making and hanging the signs. This will help children attend to the printed words.

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



Display PPT or
Transparency
W1-16



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Charts are a practical way to help children become more independent in the classroom and become aware of print.

Typical kinds of charts are: helper charts and attendance charts.

One of the jobs on the helper chart should be "LITERACY HELPER." This child can help with labeling or any other print activity that needs to be done.

Changing attendance charts gives children more chances to look at and recognize their name and other children's names.

Other charts that can be used at home or in the classroom to promote print awareness are daily schedule charts and recipe charts.

Using a daily schedule chart not only stimulates print awareness, but also helps children move from one activity to another. Each time children change activities, the adult can refer to the chart and point to the words as the next activity is read.

When children cook, they can use a recipe chart. Children can easily follow the steps of a simple recipe if it is written on a large piece of paper or board. The adult can take this opportunity to show children that the words we say can be written down and that we write one word for each word spoken. This not only promotes print awareness but helps children build oral language skills.

Let's look at a video. This segment shows examples of print in both a home and classroom environment. Watch for labels, lists, signs, and charts.



ACTIONS / MATERIALS

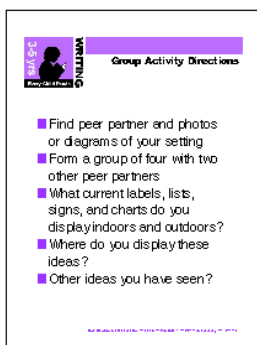


Show video
ECR 3-5
Writing Module

Have participants
share some examples



Display PPT or
Transparency
W1-17



Distribute
Handout W-5:
*Practice/
Reflection Log
and Example:
Structuring
the Environment
to Encourage
Awareness of
Print*

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Questions?

What labels did you see?

What kind of charts did you see?

Now find a peer partner. This will be someone you can practice these strategies with. This should be a person who:

- Works at your early care and education setting.
- You are comfortable planning lessons with and observing.

You will use the photos or diagrams of your home or early care and education setting that you brought with you for this activity.

Form a group of four with two other peer partners and discuss the Handout questions in your group:

- What labels, lists, signs, and charts do you currently use indoors and outdoors?
- Where do you display these ideas?
- What have you seen others use?

...continued...



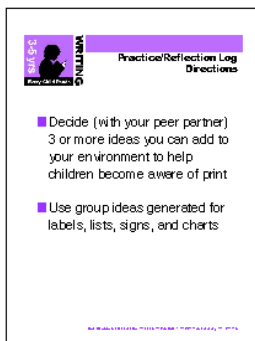
Trainer's Script

ACTIONS / MATERIALS

Give groups 1 minute warning to finish thoughts



Display PPT or Transparency W1-18



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Take about 8 minutes. Then we'll have each group report one idea.

I'm sure each group generated many ideas, but let's just report one new idea.

Questions or comments?

Take a moment to look over the ideas generated from your group discussion for labels, lists, signs, charts that could be used to help children become aware of print.

Then, decide with your partner, three ideas you could add to your environment that would help a child become aware of print.

Write your ideas for items that will be new in your environment on Handout W-5: "Practice/Reflection Log and Example: Structuring the Environment to Encourage Awareness of Print."

Take 15 minutes for this activity or about 7 minutes for each partner. Please be specific describing ideas you want to add. Page 2 of the handout provides an example.

Questions?

...continued...



ACTIONS / MATERIALS

After 7 minutes, tell participants to switch planners

Stop the activity after 14 minutes

Note to Trainer:

Some participants may not have the materials and supplies to make new labels, signs, etc., for their early care and education environments. If time permits, you may want to have materials available so participants can make signs, charts, etc., and take their print awareness ideas with them.

It may be helpful to mention where participants can get free or inexpensive materials. Some Area Education Agencies, local school districts, or Child Care Resource and Referral agencies may have materials and equipment available to make signs and charts. Businesses such as the newspaper offices, grocery stores, or factories may also have paper products they would donate for making signs and charts.

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Please add these 3 ideas to your environment between now and ____ (date).

Complete the last two columns on Handout W-5 describing the children's reactions to the signs, charts, or other print items you added to their environment.

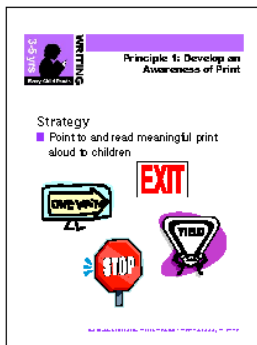
Remember to involve the children in creating these ideas, if possible.

Please bring Handout W-5 with you on _____ (date of next session).

ACTIONS / MATERIALS



Display PPT or
Transparency
W1-19



TRAINER'S SCRIPT

The second strategy to develop awareness of print is to point to and read meaningful print to children in or outside of the early care and education environment.

We mean pointing to or drawing children's attention to meaningful print during daily routines or special events in or outside of the early care and education setting.

In order for children to write letters and words, they must become familiar with seeing letters and words in a meaningful way. That means connecting the words to an experience at the time of the event.

For example, if children are eating Cheerios for breakfast, you may model print awareness by pointing to the word Cheerios on the cereal box and saying, "Cheerios.' That's a long word. You're eating Cheerios for breakfast." Another example might be if you are driving to Grandma's, point to the city limit sign and say, "That sign says 'Des Moines.' Grandma lives in Des Moines."

Adults may select a variety of meaningful print examples each day, point to a word, and then say the word aloud.

The adult does not need to read everything printed in sight. Only meaningful print connected to the child's experience needs to be pointed out.

For example, the adult could point to the title of a book or the author, the weather word of the day (sunny, cloudy, etc.), a label on a box of snacks, a child's name, etc.

What are some meaningful print words you could point out and read to children?

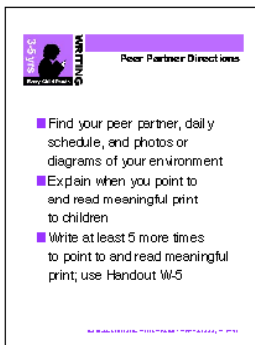
...continued...

ACTIONS / MATERIALS

TRAINER'S SCRIPT



**Display PPT or
Transparency
W1-20**



**Distribute
Handout W-6:
*Practice/
Reflection Log
and Example:
Point to
and Read
Meaningful Print***

What are some words that probably aren't meaningful to children?

The most important point of this strategy is that there are many opportunities every day to highlight a variety of meaningful words for children.

Find your peer partner, your daily schedule and your photos or diagram of your environment.

Review your daily schedules and explain to each other when you currently point to and read meaningful print to children.

We are not implying that these opportunities are always listed on your daily schedule; most will occur spontaneously. However, we thought reviewing your schedule might help you remember what you currently do and where you could add other ideas.

After you have explained what you currently do (point to and read aloud to children), find at least 5 more opportunities when you can point to and read meaningful print to children. Record these ideas on Handout W-6, the practice/reflection log.

First do one partner's and then the other partner's.

You'll have 15 minutes or about 7 minutes for each partner to plan. Page 2 contains an example.

Questions?



Trainer's Script

ACTIONS / MATERIALS

After 15 minutes, call group back together

TRAINER'S SCRIPT

Please practice this strategy – pointing to and reading meaningful print – at least 5 times between now and _____ (date of next session).

Record when you used the strategies and what happened on your Log: Handout W-6.

In the “What I Learned” column, put the child/ children’s reactions or any other information you think is important.

Bring your log, Handout W-6, to our next class, and we’ll discuss your results or experiences.

To review, you have 2 homework assignments to complete:

- 1) Add 3 new items to your environment that will encourage children to become aware of print; and
- 2) Practice pointing to and reading meaningful print to children on 5 different occasions.

Bring both Handouts W-5 and W-6 to the next class.

If possible, find time to visit your partner’s home or classroom to see examples of environmental print and find new ways to share print with children.

Also before the next class, think about an activity that you do with children to develop fine motor skills. If possible, bring a sample of that activity with you.

Questions or comments?